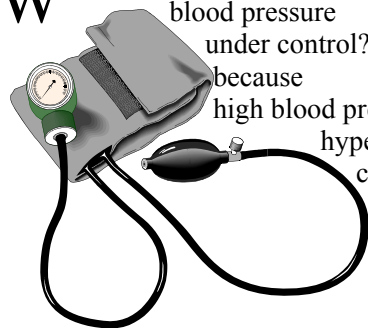


Community Health Plan

High Blood Pressure (Hypertension)

Why is it important that you keep your blood pressure under control? One reason would be because high blood pressure, also known as hypertension, is a dangerous condition that can lead to:

- Heart attack
- Stroke
- Kidney failure



The following information talks about high blood pressure, what causes high blood pressure, risk factors for high blood pressure, and how to keep your blood pressure under control.

High Blood Pressure

There is no “ideal” blood pressure reading. However, there is a range of “normal” blood pressure reading. In general, a reading that is **greater than or equal to 140 over 90** for an extended period of time is considered high blood pressure.

What Causes High Blood Pressure?

In most cases, the cause of high blood pressure is unknown. In other cases, it is due to a health problem such as kidney, heart, or other abnormality.

Risk Factors

You may be at greater risk for developing high blood pressure if:

- S someone in your family has or had hypertension;
- S you have diabetes or kidney disease;
- S you are a male;
- S you are of African American descent;

More Risk Factors

- S you are over 35 years of age;
- S you smoke;
- S you are over weight;
- S you drink alcoholic beverages frequently;
- S you do not exercise regularly.

How to Keep Your Blood Pressure Under Control

If you have high blood pressure, what can you do?

- # Take your medications as your doctor tells you.
- # Eat less food that is high in fat (e.g., fried food.)
- # Eat less salt or salty foods.
- # Increase your physical activity by exercising regularly. Make sure you talk to your doctor before you start any exercising program.
- # Do not smoke.
- # Avoid drinking alcoholic beverages frequently.
- # Learn to manage stress.

Remember...if you have high blood pressure, your doctor can help you manage it. Make sure you have your blood pressure checked regularly. Your doctor can tell you how often.

This newsletter should not be considered specific medical advice, as each circumstance is different. If you need medical advice, talk to your doctor and do not rely on knowledge gained from this information. Community Health Plan/Health Education and Promotion Unit, 07/98.

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